

Message Text

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20

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 DRC-01 CU-05

/113 W

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R 230751Z SEP 74

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2311

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 10536

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CH, PFOR, SY

SUBJECT: PRC SENDS MILITIA DELEGATION TO SYRIA

SUMMARY. THE PRC HAS SENT A MILITIA DELEGATION TO SYRIA, MARKING THE FIRST TIME SUCH A DELEGATION HAS GONE ABROAD. END SUMMARY.

1. IN THE FIRST KNOWN INSTANCE OF A MILITIA DELEGATION GOING ABROAD, (ACCORDING TO OUR RECORDS, NCNA SEPTEMBER 20 REPORTED THE DEPARTURE OF SUCH A DELEGATION FOR SYRIA. HO CHENG-WEN, LISTED AS DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE CHENG TU UNITS OF THE PLA, LED THE DELEGATION.

2. HO CHENG-WEN WAS DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE CHENG TU MILITARY REGION BEFORE THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, BUT DISAPPEARED BETWEEN 1967 AND 1973. HE REAPPEARED APRIL 1973 AT A SPORTS RALLY IN CHENG TU. IN JANUARY 1974 HE ATTENDED A MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR A
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FORMER DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER IN PEKING, AND HE APPEARED AGAIN

IN PEKING ON MAY DAY AND ON ARMY DAY. ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT LISTED WITH ANY TITLES, HIS ARMY DAY APPEARANCE HAD HIM GROUPED IN A POSITION OF PROMINENCE, RIGHT AFTER THE FOUR DEPUTY CHIEFS OF THE GENERAL STAFF AND BEFORE THE ONLY ACTIVE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE GENERAL POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

3. COMMENT. SENDING A MILITIA GROUP TO SYRIA UNDERSCORES THE ELEVATION WITHIN THE PAST YEAR OF THE STATUS OF THE MILITIA WITHIN CHINA. IN LIGHT OF PARTY-PLA CONTENTION FOR CONTROL OF THE MILITIA (1973 HONG KONG 10903), A MILITARY FIGURE BEING APPOINTED TO LEAD THE GROUP SUGGESTS THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE PLA'S POSITION IN THIS REGARD. ON THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SIDE, CHINA APPEARS TO BE TRYING TO GET OFF THE SIDELINES AND MAKE SOME LIMITED INPUT TO COUNTER THE USSR'S HEAVY PRESENCE IN SYRIA. (WE ALSO NOTE THE CHINESE HAVE CHANGED THEIR AMBASSADOR TO SYRIA.)

4. FOR DAMASCUS: WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION ON COMPOSITION AND PURPOSE OF THIS PRC MILITIA DELEGATION.
CROSS

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Message Attributes

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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, CH, SY, (HO CHENG WEN)
To: STATE DAMASCUS
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